

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 2, 2021

VIA EMAIL

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
The Capitol, H-232
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Senate Majority Leader
The Capitol, S-221
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader Schumer,

We support doing everything that is necessary to defeat the pandemic and provide economic support during this crisis. As such, we have voted to send the American Recovery Plan to the U.S. Senate. We agree with President Biden, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, and Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell among others who have said it is better to go too big than too small with the recovery still underway.

That said, we also agree with the many experts who have said this bill could be better targeted to make sure that taxpayer dollars go where they are truly needed and will work the best. In a February 1, 2021 editorial, The *Washington Post* said "There's room to scale this back, particularly in light of a new Congressional Budget Office report that predicts a better-than-expected economic recovery."

While legislating requires compromise, this bill should be improved by better targeting the funds and extending the duration the aid is available to the American people. For example, we could get more value for taxpayers and provide more predictable support by:

- Making the unemployment extension go beyond the end of August and phase down as we recover. This funding should be tied to economic conditions to provide certainty to people who lose their jobs due to the pandemic, instead of creating a cliff again;
- Better targeting the direct payments to those most in need. For instance, under the current proposal, a family of 4 making \$175,000 who had not lost any income would receive \$2,800;
- Doing state and local aid in phases and based on each state's economic situation. This funding will be spent over time, and as time passes, needs may be different. Funding should be dynamic so it meets needs of the moment, and if not needed, repurposed towards areas of higher priority;
- Offsetting items that are not directly related to COVID assistance. We owe it to the country to provide emergency support and defeat the virus. But we owe it to our grandchildren to make sure deficit spending is truly focused on emergencies.

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We strongly urge improvements in the Senate that would maximize the effectiveness of the relief, and we look forward to working with you as the Senate begins this debate.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Bourdeaux
Member of Congress

Scott H. Peters
Member of Congress

Ed Case
Member of Congress

Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress

Dean Phillips
Member of Congress